

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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November 20, 2003

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CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION ASKS MASSACHUSETTS AARP TO PLEDGE OPPOSITION TO REPUBLICAN-NOVELLI MEDICARE SCHEME

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), the Dean of the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation, was joined by the entire House Delegation today in sending a letter to the president of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) of Massachusetts Walter Sanders urging him to pledge the opposition of the Massachusetts chapter to the Republican-crafted Medicare legislation. The national office of the AARP, led by William Novelli, has come out in strong support of this bill and this letter asks the Massachusetts state office to oppose the bill because it will undermine the security of the entire Medicare program that thousands of Massachusetts seniors rely on for health care.

“This Republican Medicare bill, crafted in close consultation with AARP President William Novelli, is a prescription for higher drug prices, higher health care costs, and the ultimate demise of the critical Medicare program,” said Markey. “It is time for the Massachusetts leadership of the AARP to stand up for the seniors of Massachusetts and to abandon the national dalliance with people who are out to kill Medicare.”

The letter from all 10 Members of the House Delegation states:

“We are appalled at the decision of the National Office, led by Mr. Novelli, to squander the credibility of the AARP and to undermine Medicare by supporting this dangerous bill. The entire episode has raised serious questions about Mr. Novelli’s judgment and his priorities. It is indeed telling that Mr. Novelli has written a glowing forward to a book by Newt Gingrich, praising this man for his ideas to “transform” Medicare. Mr. Gingrich’s plan to transform Medicare is, as he so succinctly put it, to let Medicare “wither on the vine.”

“This Republican plan that Mr. Novelli says you support makes it virtually impossible for any senior to purchase U.S. made drugs from Canada at lower prices and actually prohibits the ability of Medicare to negotiate with drug companies for wholesale discounts. Is it any wonder that according to a poll of AARP’s own members, 61 percent view the pending Medicare bill unfavorably?

“In July AARP believed there must be a guaranteed drug plan. Now, Mr. Novelli has abandoned this position. The Republican plan he now supports, in your name, will force seniors to spend \$4020 out of their own pockets before any catastrophic plan is activated. In Massachusetts alone nearly 60,000 seniors are expected to lose their existing employer-provided prescription drug plan as a result of Mr. Novelli’s endorsement of the Republican plan.”

The letter can be found at www.house.gov/markey.

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